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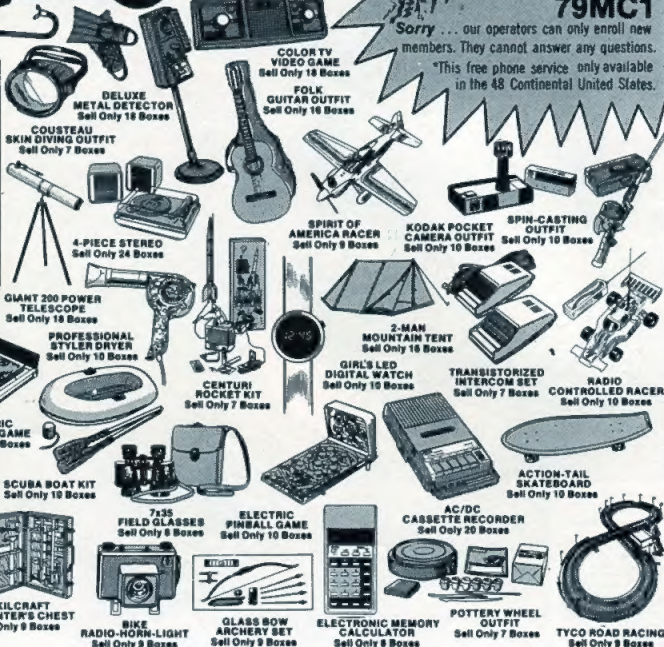
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Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

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PENCILER

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MICHAEL ZECK



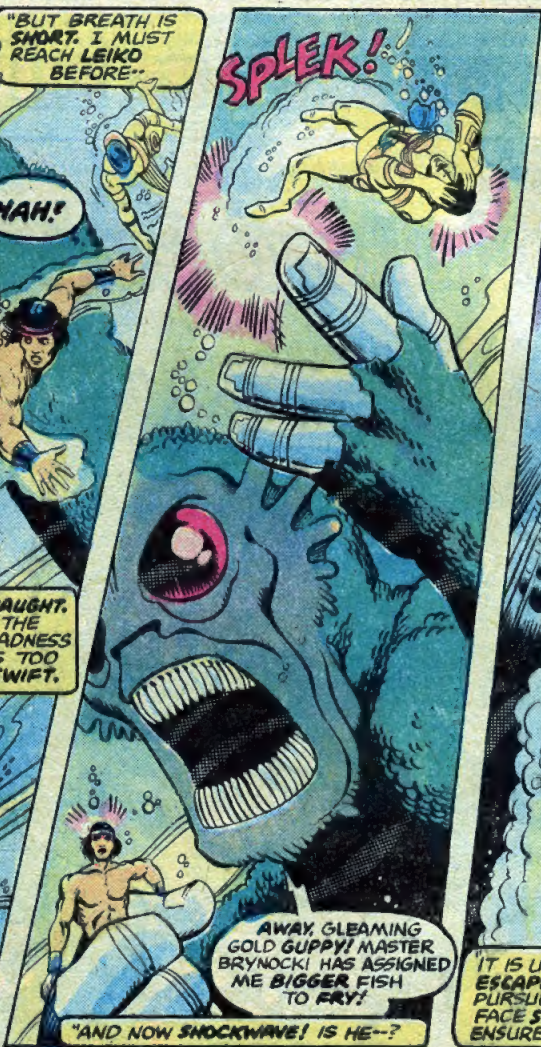
"BUT BREATH IS SHORT. I MUST REACH LEIKO BEFORE"

NAH!

"CAUGHT. THE MADNESS IS TOO SWIFT."

"IT ALL HAPPENS TOO QUICKLY..."

SPLK!



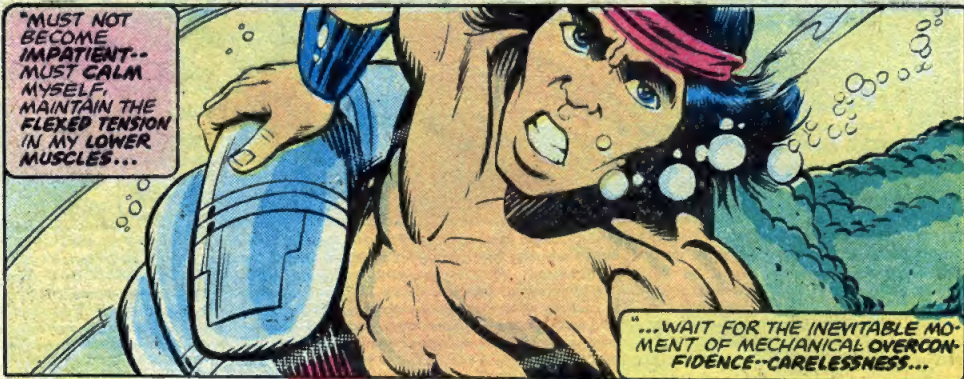
AWAY, GLEAMING GOLD GUPPY! MASTER BRYNOCK! HAS ASSIGNED ME BIGGER FISH TO FRY!

"AND NOW SHOCKWAVE! IS HE--?"

"NO--PERHAPS INJURED, BUT AT LEAST HE STREAKS FOR THE SURFACE ON HIS OWN POWER."

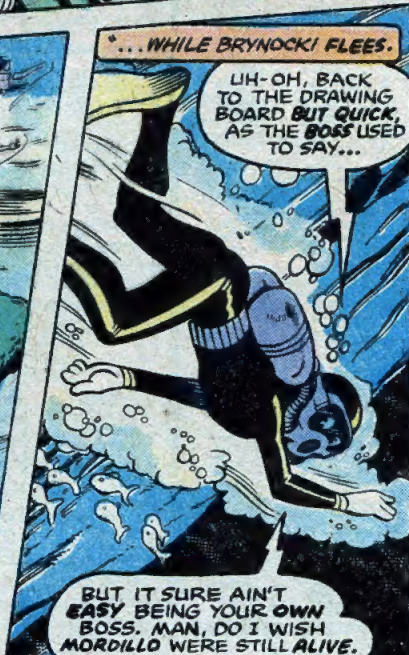
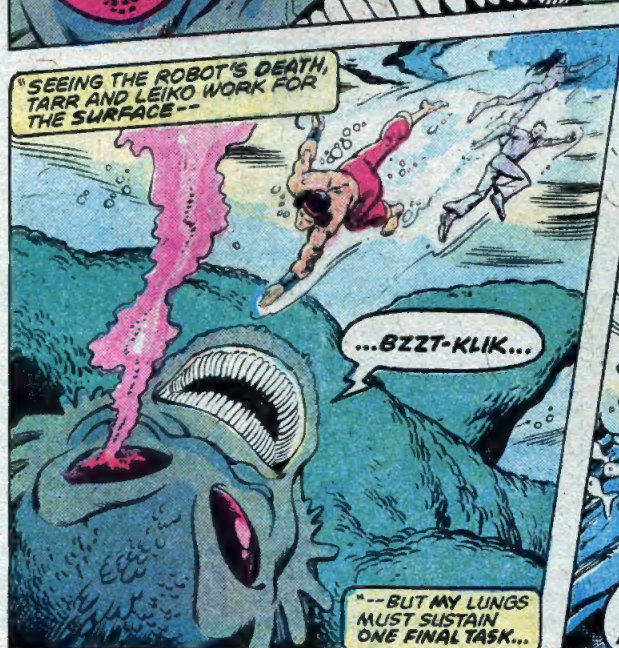
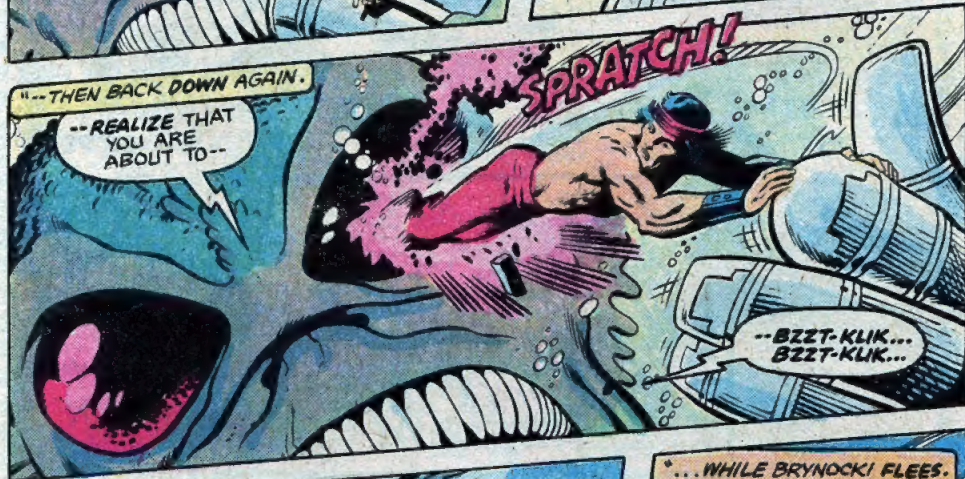
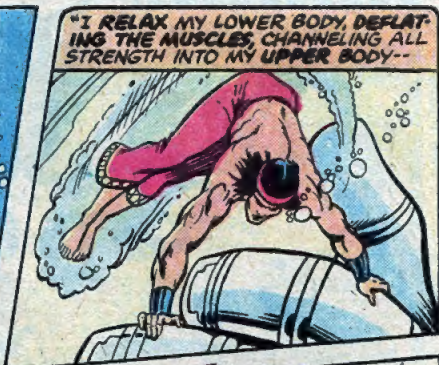
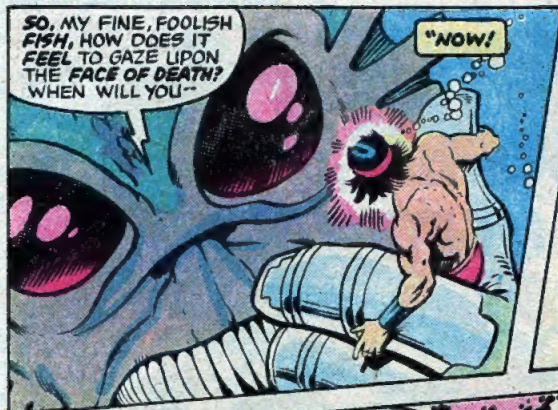


"IT IS UNLIKELY HE WILL ESCAPE, YET WE MUST PURSUE HIM TO THE SURFACE SOON--IF ONLY TO ENSURE OUR OWN SURVIVAL."



"MUST NOT BECOME IMPATIENT-- MUST CALM MYSELF, MAINTAIN THE FLEXED TENSION IN MY LOWER MUSCLES..."

"...WAIT FOR THE INEVITABLE MOMENT OF MECHANICAL OVERCONFIDENCE--CARELESSNESS..."



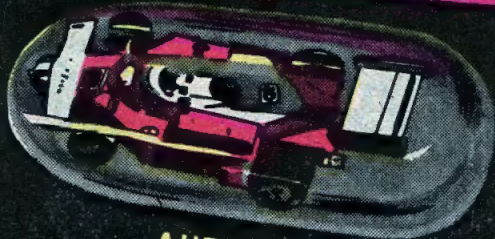
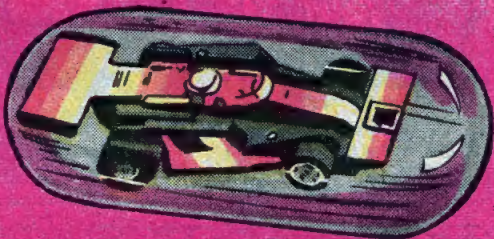
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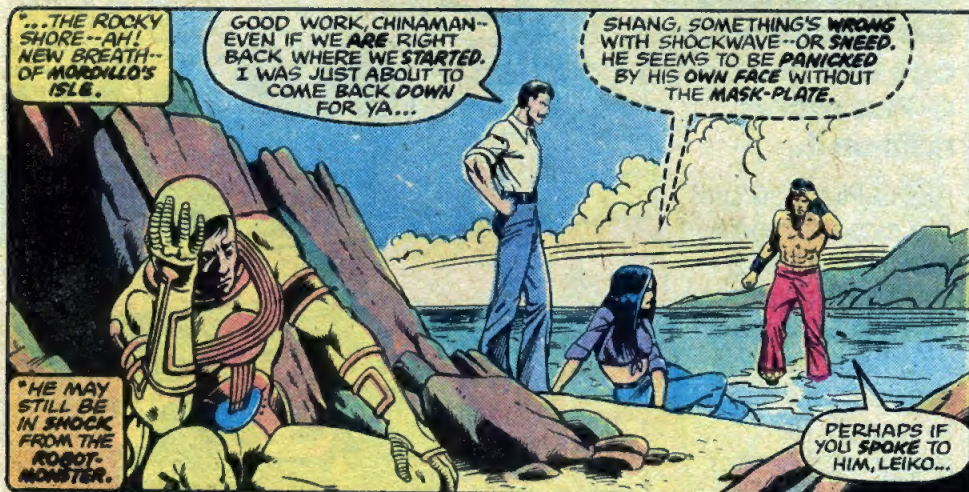
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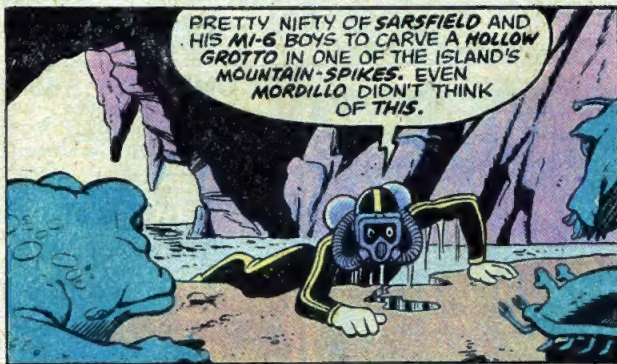


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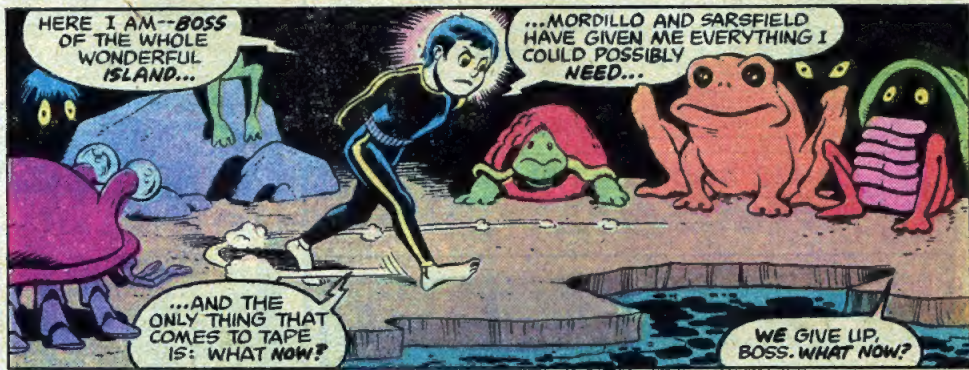




PRETTY NIFTY OF SARSFIELD AND HIS MI-6 BOYS TO CARVE A HOLLOW GROTTO IN ONE OF THE ISLAND'S MOUNTAIN-SPIKES. EVEN MORDILLO DIDN'T THINK OF THIS.



LOTTA GOOD IT DOES ME, THOUGH...



HERE I AM--BOSS OF THE WHOLE WONDERFUL ISLAND...

...MORDILLO AND SARSFIELD HAVE GIVEN ME EVERYTHING I COULD POSSIBLY NEED...

...AND THE ONLY THING THAT COMES TO TAPE IS: WHAT NOW?

WE GIVE UP, BOSS. WHAT NOW?



"AND NOW...WHAT?"

--PICKUP PLANE IS LATE, ALL RIGHT. AND THE LONGER WE STAY HERE--LIKE BLOODY SITTING DUCKS--THE MORE WE RISK GETTIN' WASTED BY BRYNOCKI'S LUNATIC ROBOTS.

YES, I'M GETTING ANXIOUS, TOO. WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED OUR GOALS HERE--RESCUED YOU, BLACK JACK, AND CAPTURED SMOCKWAVE. IT'S TIME TO GET OFF THIS MAD ISLAND.



"BESIDES, I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF SIR DENIS, CLIVE, AND MISS GREVILLE BEING ALONE IN THAT CASTLE IN SCOTLAND..."

WHEN DO YOU THINK SARSFIELD WILL BE BACK, SMITH?

OH, I IMAGINE SOON, CLIVE--WHEN HE FEELS LIKE TAUNTING US AGAIN.

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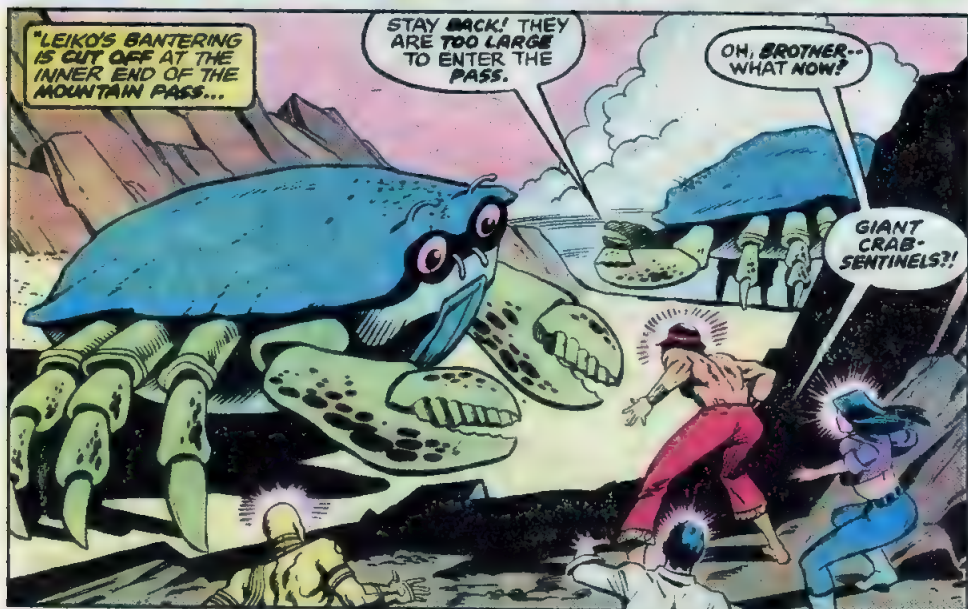
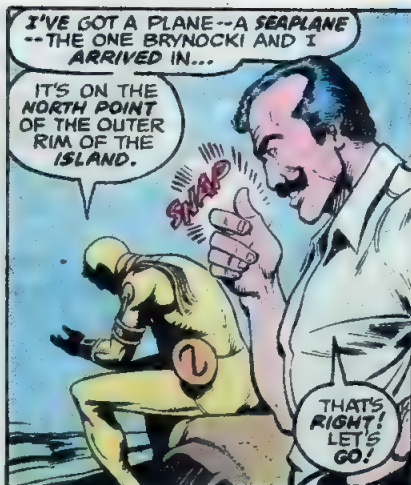
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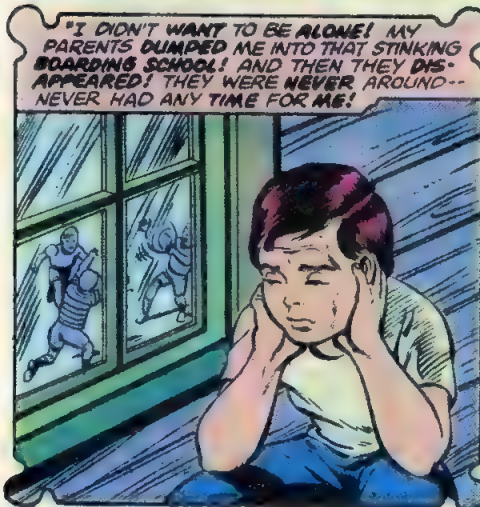
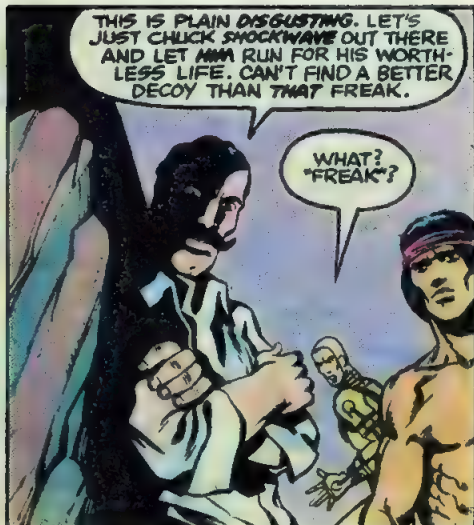
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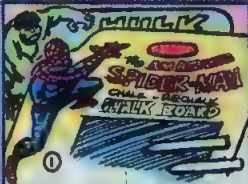
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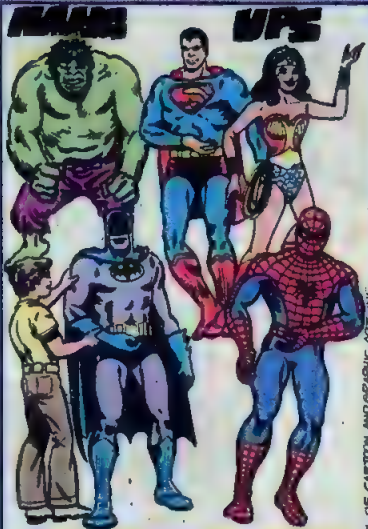
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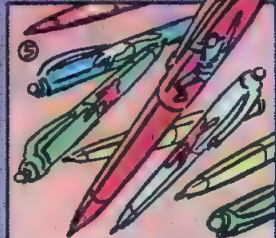
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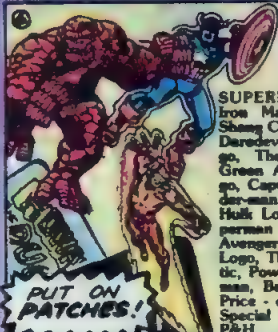
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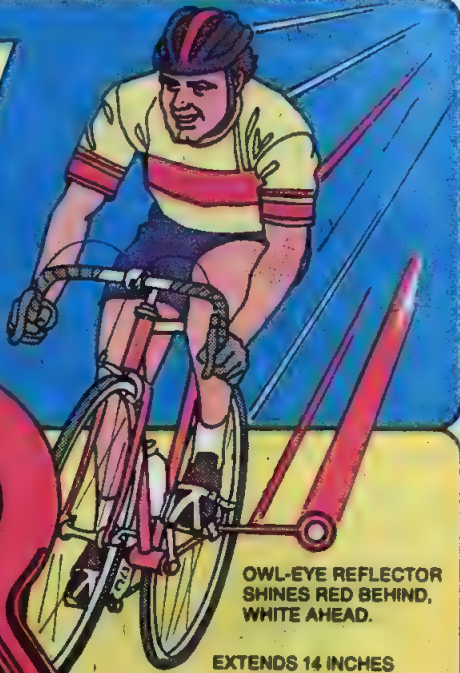
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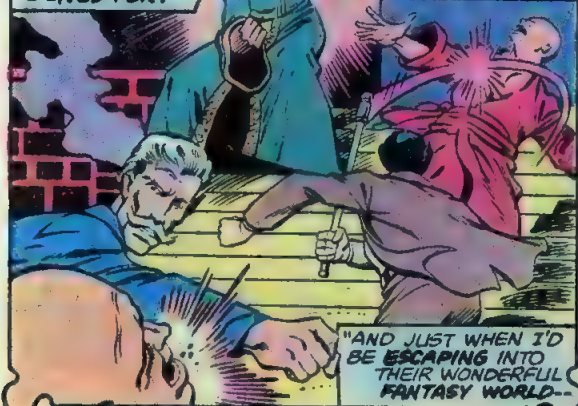
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2

"THEY'D TELL ME STORIES ABOUT THEIR ADVENTURES FIGHTING FU MANCHU. IT WAS THE ONLY THING I LIVED FOR."



"AND JUST WHEN I'D BE ESCAPING INTO THEIR WONDERFUL FANTASY WORLD--"

"...THEY'D LEAVE."



"I HATED THEM FOR THAT...HATED THEM."

BUT I ALSO ENVIED THEM, YOU KNOW...



...UNTIL I VOWED I'D GROW UP TO BE AN AGENT JUST LIKE MY UNCLE--A BETTER AGENT.

AND I DID, TOO...OH YES, NOW I BECAME AN AGENT...



CONGRATULATIONS, LANCASTER, YOU'VE MADE THE GRADE! A DAY OF HONOR FOR OUR FAMILY--PRODUCING ANOTHER AGENT OF HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE.



"BUT THE PROUD UNCLE ACT DIDN'T FOOL ME FOR A MOMENT."

"I KNEW HE WAS JEALOUS..."



"...RESENTED MY YOUTH, THE GLORY OF MY FIRST REAL MISSION--MY BAPTISM OF FIRE IN NORTH AFRICA..."

"...WHERE I PROMPTLY GOT MY FACE BLOWN OFF."



"I EVEN KNEW HE WAS GLAD WHEN IT HAPPENED."

YOU SEE, I WAS A FAILURE... ON MY FIRST REAL MISSION. I WAS A NOBODY IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND NOW THE NEW IDENTITY I HOPED TO ESTABLISH HAD BEEN DESTROYED-- ALONG WITH MY FACE.

I WAS A NOBODY MORE THAN EVER.

I HAD TO BECOME SOMEBODY.

"SO I WENT TO THE ORIENT, BOTH TO LOSE MYSELF AND TO MAKE SOMETHING NEW OF MYSELF.

"I TRAINED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS, BUILDING CONFIDENCE...

"THEN I EVEN REBUILT MY FACE AND BODY--WITH A METAL EXOSKELETON AND MY ELECTROSHOCK APPARATUS. AGAIN, I WAS BOTH HIDING THE OLD AND PRESENTING THE NEW.

"FINALLY I HAD A REAL IDENTITY IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW.

"I JOINED A TRAVELING SHOW AS SHOCKWAVE.

"AND I DAZZLED THEM.

"THEY ALL CAME TO SEE ME--THEY ALL KNEW ME--AND THEY NEVER FORGOT ME."

NOW I HAD AN IDENTITY, ONE I SHAPED MYSELF--NOT ONE FORCED ON ME BY NEGLECT AND BOARDING SCHOOLS.

BUT I STILL REMEMBERED UNCLE NAYLAND'S STORIES, AND I WAS STILL HAUNTED BY MY OWN FAILURE. I HAD TO RETURN TO MY WORK--HAD TO BE A SUCCESS THIS TIME--AND SINCE UNCLE'S SIDE HAD FIRED ME, THE SWINES--

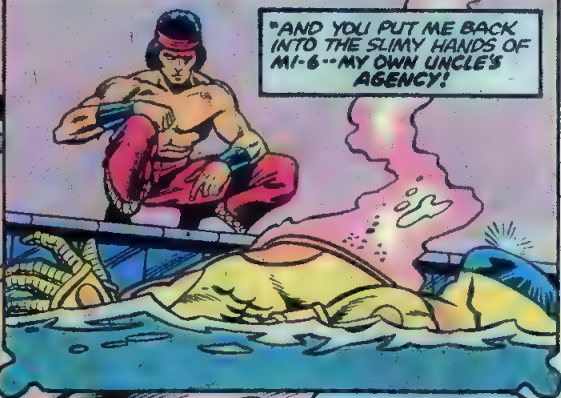
"--I BECAME A FREE AGENT...

"...AND I WORKED GLADLY FOR-- FU MANCHU."

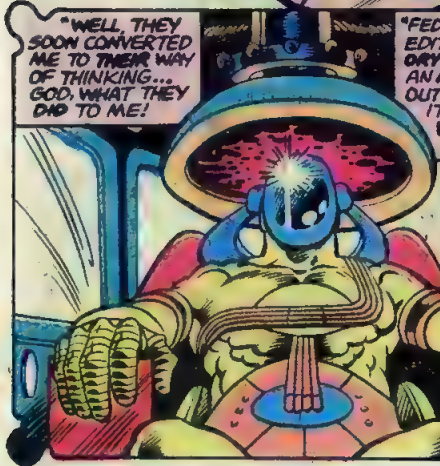
AND THEN...I
...FAILED
...AT...
THAT...
TOO...



"YOU DEFEATED ME, SHANG-CHI-- AT GRISWOLD'S PLACE IN SWITZERLAND. YOU WERE JUST A PUNK... YOU STILL ARE-- BUT YOU BEAT ME BAD..."



"AND YOU PUT ME BACK INTO THE SLIMY HANDS OF MI-6--MY OWN UNCLE'S AGENCY!"



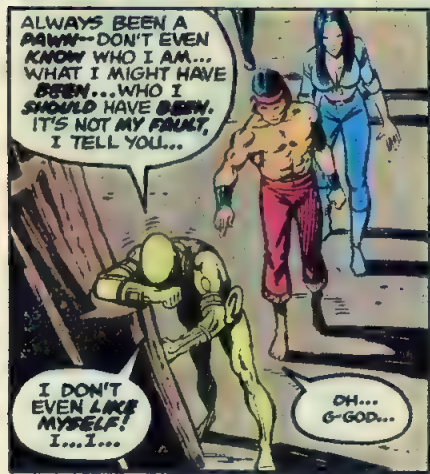
"WELL, THEY SOON CONVERTED ME TO THEIR WAY OF THINKING... GOD, WHAT THEY DID TO ME!"

"FED ME ORDERS-- EDITED MY MEMORY--MADE ME AN ASSASSIN WITHOUT ME KNOWING IT--MADE ME WANT TO KILL YOU!!"



IS IT ANY WONDER I'M...CONFUSED? MY MIND WAS...RAPED.

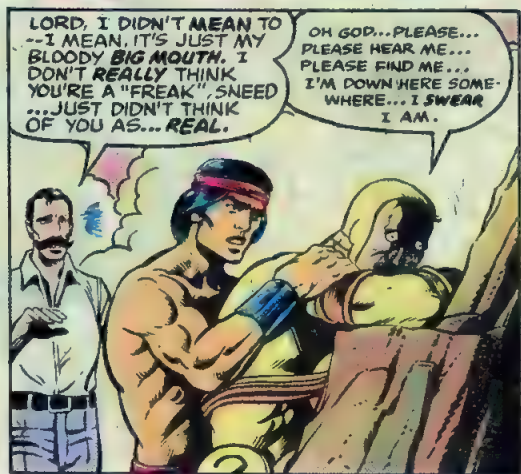
I'VE NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO BE NORMAL...TO BE MY OWN PERSON...



ALWAYS BEEN A PAWN--DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO I AM... WHAT I MIGHT HAVE BEEN...WHO I SHOULD HAVE BEEN. IT'S NOT MY FAULT, I TELL YOU...

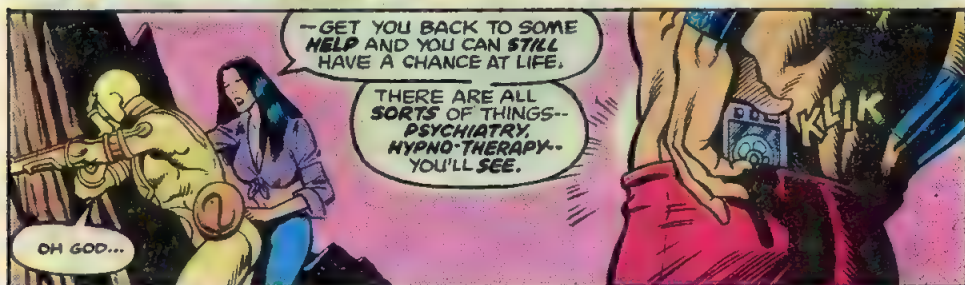
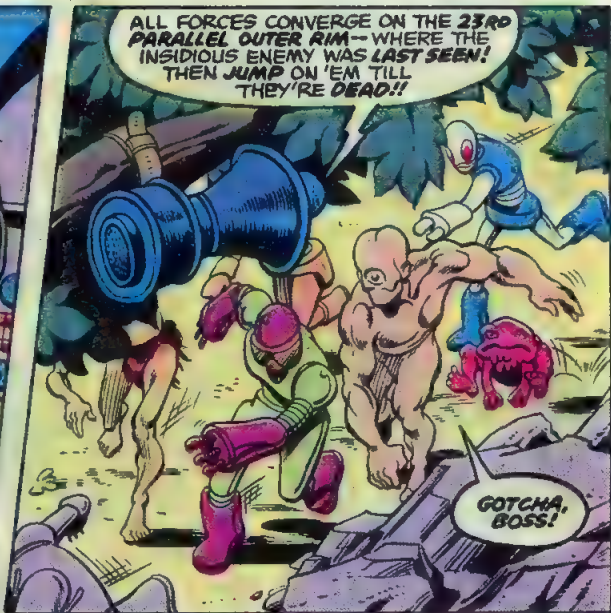
I DON'T EVEN LIKE MYSELF!
I...I...

OH...
G-GOD...



LORD, I DIDN'T MEAN TO --I MEAN, IT'S JUST MY BLOODY BIG MOUTH. I DON'T REALLY THINK YOU'RE A "FREAK", SNEED...JUST DIDN'T THINK OF YOU AS... REAL.

OH GOD...PLEASE... PLEASE HEAR ME... PLEASE FIND ME... I'M DOWN HERE SOMEWHERE... I SWEAR I AM.



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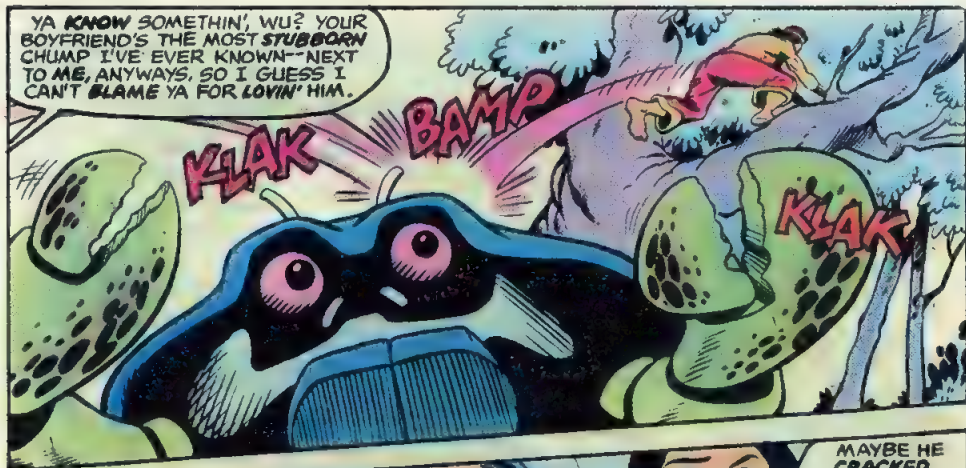
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YA KNOW SOMETHIN', WU? YOUR BOYFRIEND'S THE MOST **STUBBORN** CHUMP I'VE EVER KNOWN--NEXT TO ME, ANYWAYS, SO I GUESS I CAN'T **BLAME** YA FOR **LOVIN'** HIM.

KLAK **BAMP**

KLAK

BUT LET ME **ASK** YA, WU--WHY DO YOU THINK **SNEED** **SPILLED** HIS GUT LIKE THAT? IF HIS BRAIN REALLY IS CONTROLLED BY **MI-6**, HOW WAS HE ABLE TO **SNITCH** ON 'EM?

MAYBE HE **CRACKED**. THAT MONSTER **SHATTERED** HIS **FACE-PLATE**--**SHANG** **DESTROYING** HIS **ELECTROSHOCK** **COSTUME**...

...HIS PRECIOUS "**IDENTITY**" **TORN AWAY** AGAIN--MAYBE IT **BROKE** HIM **FREE** OF ALL **MENTAL** **CONTROL**.

YEAH, **MAYBE**... BUT I CAN'T **HELP** **THINKIN'**--MAYBE IT'S ALL PART OF ANOTHER **BLOODY** **STINKIN'** **TRAP**.

WE CAN'T **WORRY** ABOUT THAT **NOW**, **BLACK JACK**. WE'VE JUST GOT TO **HOPE** **SHANG** **REACHES** THAT **PLANE**--

"--SO WE CAN GET BACK TO **SIR DENIS** AND **CLIVE**."

WHAT THE **DEVIL** IS **GOING** ON, **SARSFIELD**? AFTER THE **WAR-YORE** **AFFAIR**, **MI-6** WAS **CLEANED** **OUT**...

THE **WAR-YORE** **OPERATION** WAS **NOT** JUST A **RENEGADE** **ABERRATION**, **NAYLAND**.

NOW, YOU CAN **HAVE** YOUR **CHOICE**: **CONFESS** **EVERYTHING** AND **CONSENT** TO **MIND-ALTERATION**--OR **DIE**.

IT WAS **AGENCY** **POLICY** FROM THE **VERY TOP**--AT LEAST UNTIL WE GOT **CAUGHT**, WHERE-UPON IT **TRANSFORMED** INTO A "**RENEGADE** **ABERRATION**."

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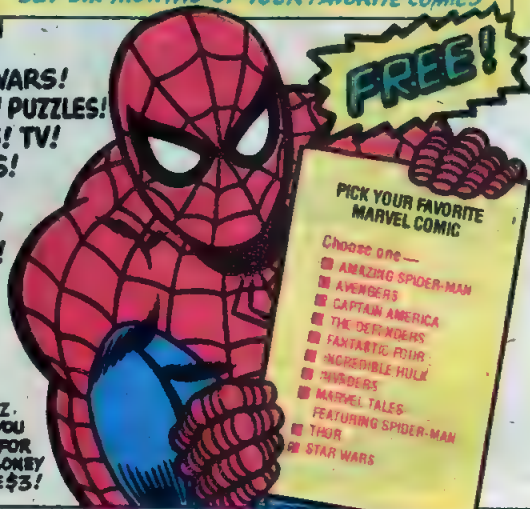
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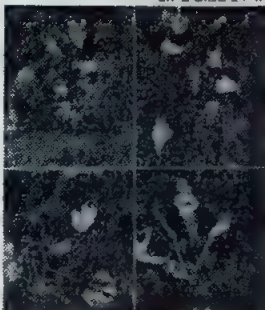
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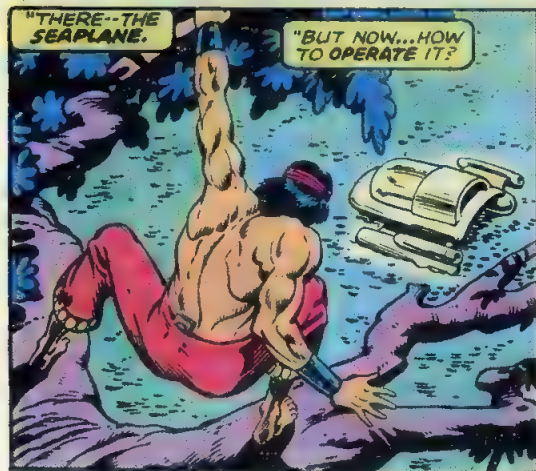
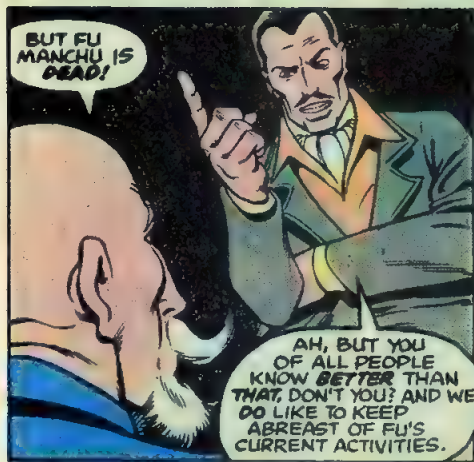
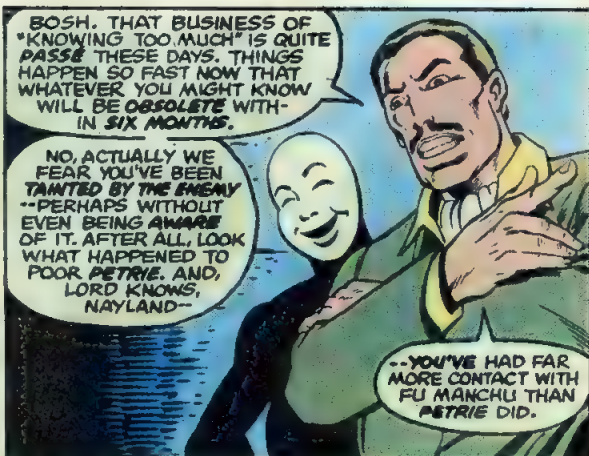
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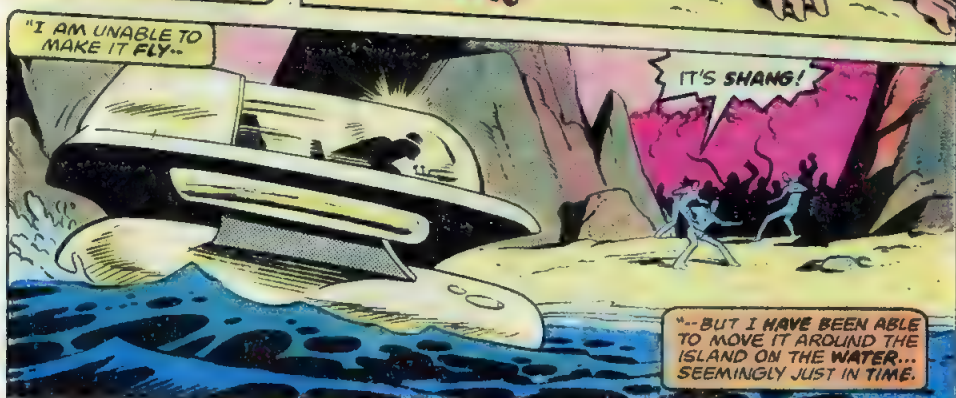
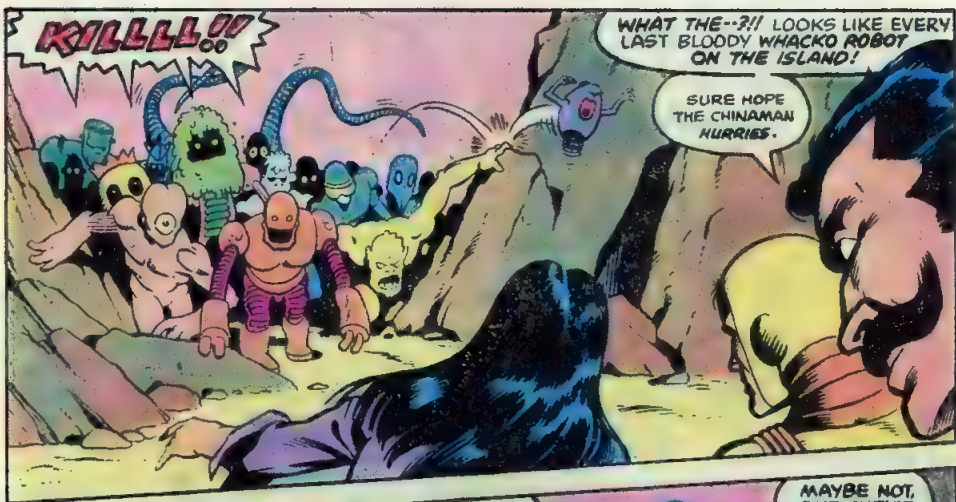
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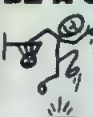
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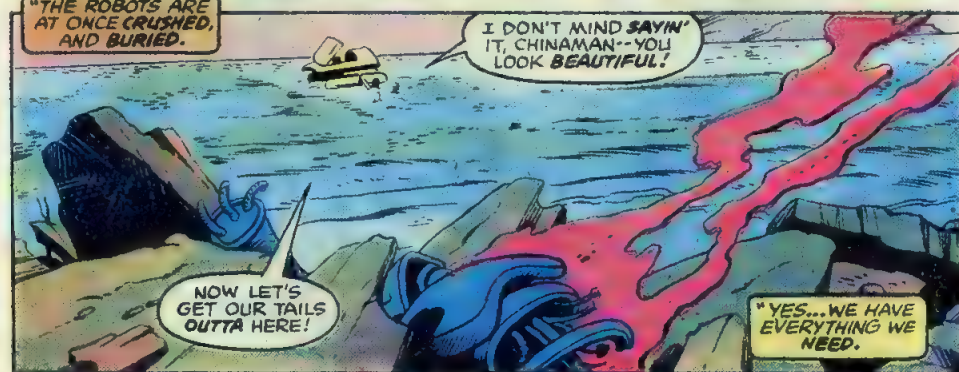
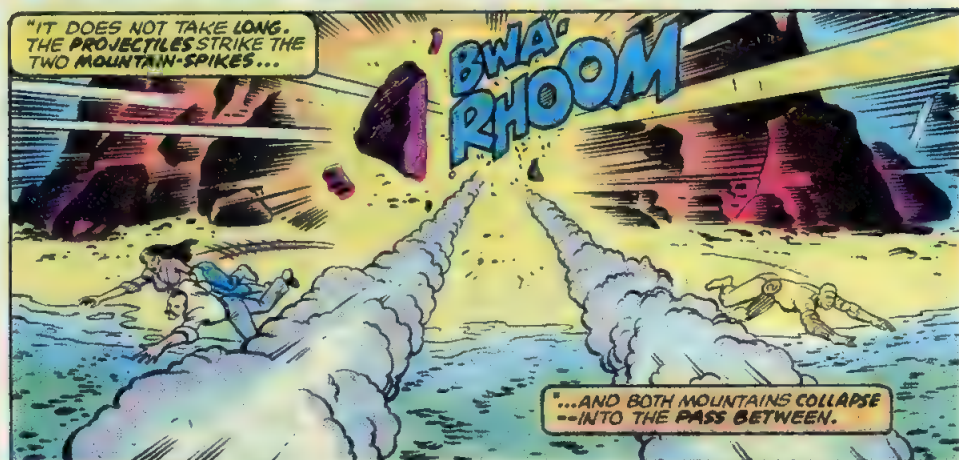
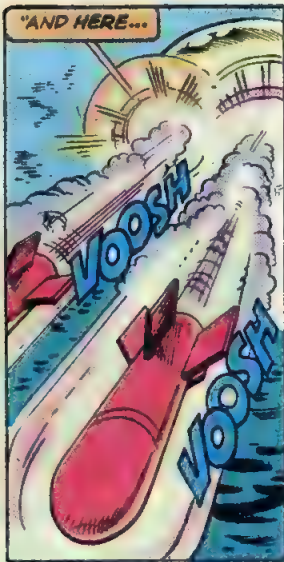
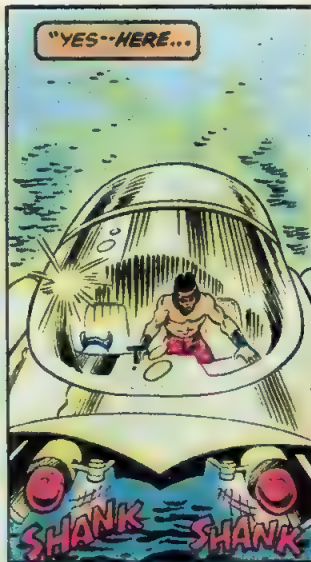
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--THEN I MUST SEE HIM.

--MI-6 OR A HEATHEN CHINESE?--

LOOKS LIKE I BAKED AGAIN, BOSS. IT JUST AIN'T THE SAME WITHOUT YA! IF ONLY YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GO AND GET YOURSELF SCORCHED TO DEATH--!

EVEN THEN, AT LEAST YOU SURE PROVED THAT YOUR SOLAR-CHUTE WORKED.

BUT ME...WELL, I GUESS I JUST AIN'T MUCH GOOD AT ALL AS A RULER.

SORRY, BOSS.

BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

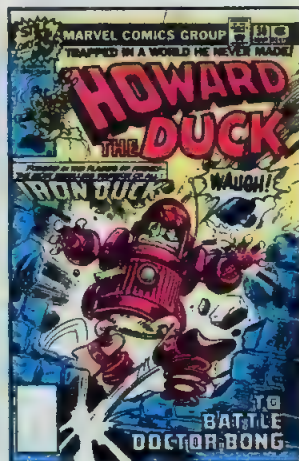
Gigantic news, gang! Here's the blockbuster I've been waiting years to announce! Remember the almost legendary original Spider-Man and Dr. Strange strips—the ones done by yours truly and Steve Ditko? The ones that helped to make the wondrous web-slinger and the mystical Master of Black Magic two of the most popular heroes ever to grace the pandemonious pages of a Marvel mag? And remember how Sturdy Steve one day up and left the bewildered Bullpen to seek other paths of glory? Well, not only have I been eagerly awaiting his eventual return, but most of Marveldom Assembled has been waiting for it too, judging by the mountain of letters we've received over the years asking when the dazzling Mr. D. would return to the realm of the True Believer! In fact, I don't think I've ever spoken at a campus anywhere without at least half-a-dozen misty-eyed Marvelophiles imploring me to find some way to get Steve to wend his way home again! Okay now—here comes the good part! Ditko's back—and Marvel's got him! You'll be seeing his own brand of artistic magic in some of our greatest and most exciting mags, coming your way soon! Forgive me for sounding as if this is some sort of hard-sell commercial plug—it isn't meant to be. It's just that I feel incredibly sentimental about one of our original greats climbing aboard again, just as I felt when Jolly Jack Kirby returned to the scenes of his former glory! (For those of you who've been wondering what Jack is up to now, he's doing our storyboard layouts for NBC-TV's "Fantastic Four" Saturday A.M. animated show—miss 'em at your own risk!) And now, on behalf of the whole blissful Bullpen, and countless legions of Marvelites everywhere, let me joyfully shout "Welcome back, Steve! It's been a long wait, but it's gonna be worth it—'cause the best lies just ahead!"

Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! Most Outrageous Oversight of 1978 Department: Would you believe that we forgot to mention the little fact that, a few months back, *Broadway BOB HALL* stepped down as Editor of about half the Marvel color comics line. Bob, as many of you know, is producer and co-author of the off-Broadway hit play, *The Passion of Dracula*. It seems that the show is such a smash that it's opened some new doors for Bob in the world of screenplay-writing and major theatrical endeavors. It was with great sadness that Bob left Marvel, (blunted somewhat by the wild and crazy no-holds-barred party thrown by the staff in his honor) but he promises to fit, in some freelance work for us as often as possible. Best of luck from all of us in the Bullpen, Bob! We'll miss you!

ITEM! Second Most Outrageous Oversight of 1978 Department: When Bob Hall stepped down, much-beleaguered Editor-in-Chief Jim (Trouble) Shooter found himself in an uncharacteristically lucky position. As fate would have it, right about then, a long-time Marvel Master Artist and all-time friend of the Bullpen returned from his brief hiatus with... the other guys... and rejoined the fold! He's a true Renaissance man! He pencils! He inks! He writes! He edits! He has 1001 uses around the home and office, and he's an absolute terror on the volleyball court! Those of you who pay attention to the credits already know we're talking about none other than *Amiable* AL MILGROM, whose artful delineation of the CAPTAIN MARVEL series dazzled Marveldom assembled a couple years back! Al is better than ever, it seems, and raring to go! Besides editing DAREDEVIL, DEFENDERS, DOCTOR STRANGE, GODZILLA, HULK, TEAM-UP, MICRONAUTS, PETER PARKER, POWER MAN/IRON FIST, TARZAN, and more, Al's pencilling and inking all over the lot! Check out *HOWARD THE DUCK* #30, for instance! Good to have you with us, Al, and we're sorry we forgot to mention it sooner. The thing is, it seemed so natural to have you back home again, it sort of slipped our minds that you were ever gone!



ITEM! It also bears mentioning that during all this editorial reshuffling somebody was minding the store—namely, faithful Assistant Editor *Mannerly* MARY JO DUFFY, who kept things running smoothly. Mary Jo is learning the editorial ropes with amazing alacrity, and it's a safe bet you'll be hearing lots more about this talented lady before long—right now, in fact! It seems that Jo has finally snagged her first regular series, namely *POWER MAN/IRON FIST*, and right off the bat she's made a winner! You've got to see issue #68! You just plain won't believe who Luke Cage and the K'un-Lun Kid come to scratch against! It may be the mismatch of the century—and not in favor of the good guys! Nope, we

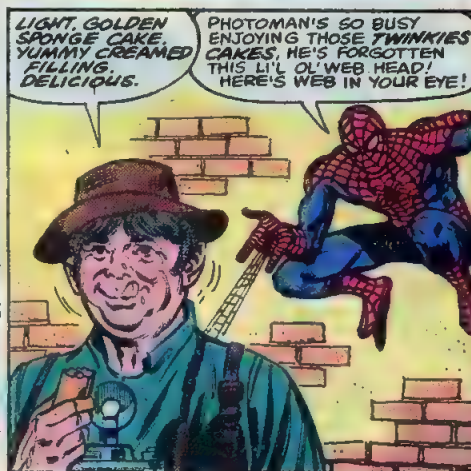
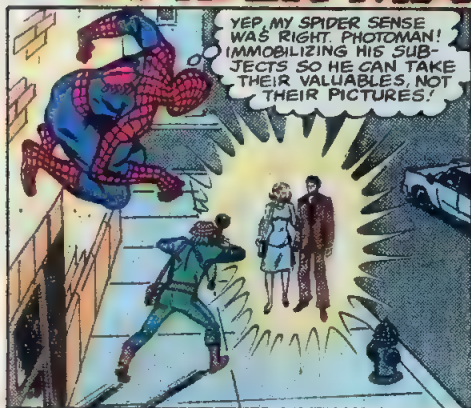


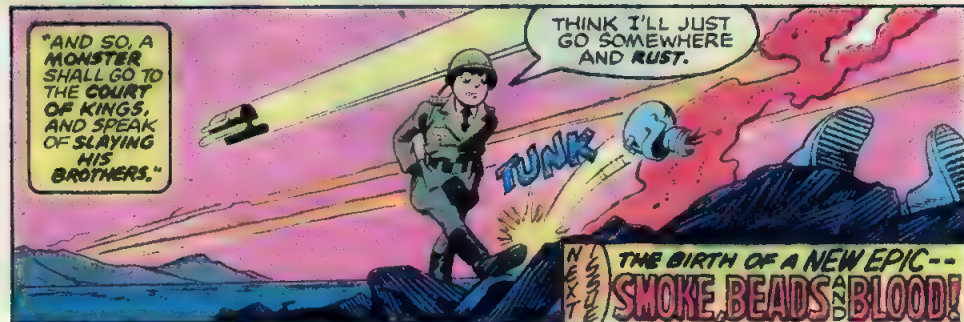
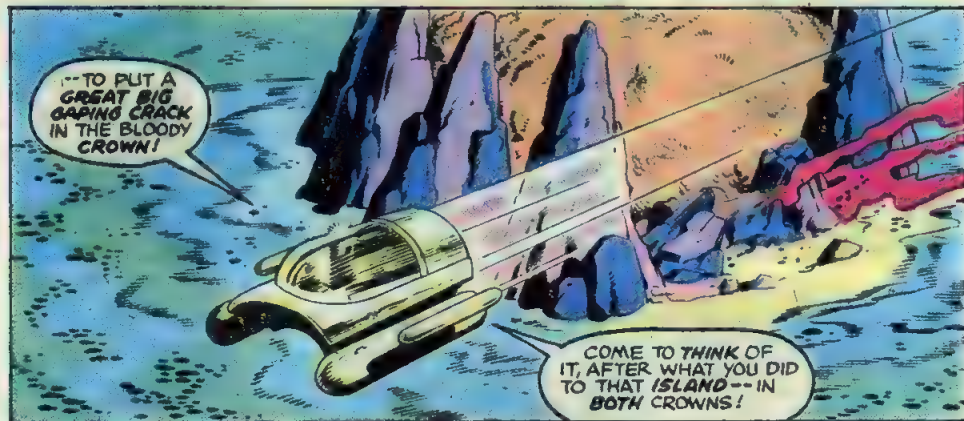
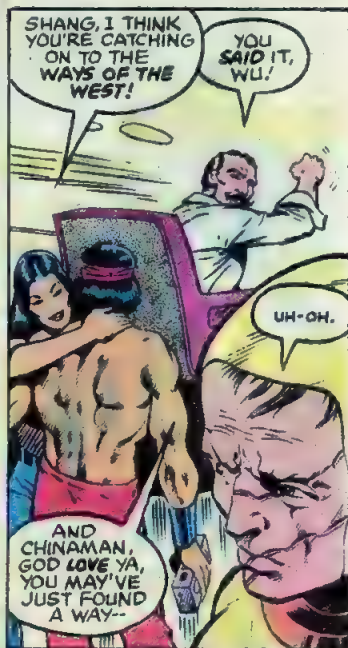
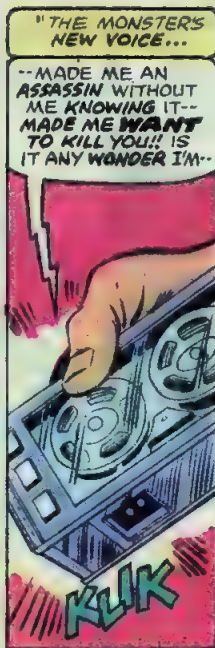
won't ruin the surprise for you—but why let curiosity gnaw at your brain? Run down to your newsstand and buy a copy, already. It's there waiting for you!

ITEM! Speaking of waiting, it seems that the whole blamed world is breathlessly anticipating the comics event of the year—that being, of course, the 100th issue of *CONAN THE BARBARIAN*! As you read this, issue #97 is just hitting the stands, but for those few of you who aren't regulars (shame!), it's definitely not too early to get in on the building excitement. Actually the continuing saga has been gaining momentum for literally years now, and believe us, the payoff coming up in issue #100 is well worth the waiting. The few holdouts out there (you know who you are) who figure to buy our double-size spectacular hundredth issue as an investment, since it's sure to become a valuable collector's item in record time, but who won't part with a few shekels for the regular issues leading up to it, are actually cheating themselves out of the full glorious impact of this outstanding epic tale. So get with it, guys! You've been warned!

ITEM! In case you've been wondering about *HOWARD THE DUCK* lately, or even if you haven't, here's the scoop. Firstly, *Gentleman* GENE COLAN, high-ranking contender for the Greatest Penciler in the Universe title, is back, as is *Super* (nker *Amiable*) AL MILGROM, and the word for the artwork is *superb*! Ace Writer *Boisterous* BILL MANTLO has found his Niche of Destiny with the Duck, and as a result of all this happy harmony of talent, issue #30 of HTD may well be the best ever! What's in it? Well, the return of *Dr. Bong*, for openers, and wait'll you see how Howie gears up for the final confrontation with his arch foe! Truck on down to your local magazine shop in a hurry and you may still be able to latch onto a copy of this fowl work—and whatever you do, don't miss next issue. It's even better! Only Marvel could bring you such madness for such a small fee!

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MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

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ROGER STERN
EDITOR
JIM SALICRUP
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Kung Fu Folks,

Tales which can be objectively described as being bittersweet love stories are a rarity in comics. They always have been. There are some things which just can't be done in the medium, such as the painstaking development of interpersonal relationships of the kind found in the works of William Faulkner or Tennessee Williams — which, in comics, would call for issue after issue crammed with a great deal of dialogue and very little action. And yet, somehow, it has now been done.

It is perhaps appropriate that MASTER OF KUNG FU is the book in which the bittersweet love story finally comes to comics in a sensitive, intelligent manner which avoids all the pitfalls endemic to this type of tale and, in the final analysis, succeeds in giving its readership a narrative that is at once meaningful and exciting and more than a little ironic. After all, it was MOKF which first demonstrated that a martial arts book need not be a superficial, simple-minded all-action title, and that a solid supporting cast need not relegate the protagonist to a secondary character in his own feature.

MASTER OF KUNG FU #70's "Home to Die" may have had its faults, but lack of guts was not one of them. You've given us a story that offers depth and power and, not incidentally, a lot of fine artwork by Pat Broderick. In my book, that's good enough.

Ed Via
1648 Dean Rd.
Roanoke, VA 24018

We must be reading the same book, Ed.

Dear Masters of Kung Fu,

By the time this missive reaches you, the "Red Seas" saga will be a thing of the past, but I still feel that I should throw in my own two bits' worth.

Being a keen English student, I decided to take my holiday in England. While I was there I picked up about 200 of your Marvel mini-masterpieces, because they help me with my English. My favorite title was and is MASTER OF KUNG FU — mainly because it is the one with the best English, so I could understand it completely even as I learn more.

The latest storyline is really good, and it's great to see Cat back. My main gripe is the art. Since Paul Gulacy left, the art has been very inconsistent, and it's really hurt my favorite comicbook. Please get a permanent artist, preferably Mike Zeck or even Jim Craig if someone else takes up the inking reins. Doug, as usual, your handling of the various characters is superb; a very rarely finds such real-life characters in fiction.

About the latest issue: Wow. What can I say! The cover is too good for words. Please keep Paul busy doing the odd cover, as they are a real treat. He may be gone, but he is certainly not forgotten. The story seems to be nearing its end, which looks like it will be a real dandy. It is a pity that I won't be able to read the conclusion until my next holiday in England, which won't be for a long time.

Before I close I would like to make a request: If there are any comic collectors in the area of Maastricht, would they please contact me?

Thank you, gentlemen, for hours of entertainment and for listening. Until Shang-Chi starts speaking American, make mine MASTER OF KUNG FU.

David Scherpenhuizen
Silvanushof 9
Maastricht HOLLAND

Teachers we don't claim to be, David, but your letter is just as well written as most of those we receive in the local mail. (And your wish is our command: Mike Zeck is the new permanent artist on MOKF, and Jim Craig is working on a special three-part fill-in, perhaps inked by himself.)

Dear Doug,

There's something in you that apparently doesn't like stable relationships. Now I'm wondering who will wind up with whom when this is all over. Worse than a soap opera! Will he go for the status quo (Clive-Greville; Leiko-Shang; Juliette-Cat) or Shang and Juliette with Leiko in the cold or maybe with Cat or Leiko with Clive again and Melissa Greville or Juliette dead? I confess I really have no idea, but I hope you'll resolve it before all this guessing gives me a terminal headache.

Ann Nichols
4864 Sioux Ave.
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

We hope so too, Ann, but at this point even Doug doesn't know who'll end up with whom. He just watches and listens, playing the whole thing by ear. We're all voyeurs on this bus. . .

Dear Mr. Moench,

I would like to talk to you. I have a few things on my mind that I really have to express, and they deal with "Nights" in MOKF #71.

When I began reading this story the sky over L.A. was covered with clouds slowly gathering the promise, or perhaps threat, of rain. It appeared that this was destined to be a very dreary Monday.

I had originally planned to go to the beach today, but with all this terrible weather I decided to stay home and take care of the apartment. Depressing. Then I saw MOKF lying there and said to myself: "Self, seeing as how MOKF has always been one of my favorites, maybe it'll brighten my day." So I started reading. Through page seven we see Shang-Chi putting the puzzle-pieces of his life back in order, and page ten brings us back to the present. Ironically, Leiko is also working on a puzzle.

With Fleetwood Mac in the background and pizza in the foreground, Chi's mind goes back to Sandy, then to Juliette. . . whereupon Fleetwood Mac deftly brings Chi back to the present and opens his eyes to Leiko. Bravo, Moench! If the story had ended right here on page fifteen, I would have been more than happy. Shang and Leiko making love and the Siamese cat displaying the better part of valor. But no, Doug takes us to a workout session and our lovers then see *Close Encounters*. (Don't worry, Leiko; the little boy broke me apart too.) Finally, Sir Denis' shocking revelation and next issue promises to be a stunner.

I have now finished "Nights" and as I return it to the shelf, I am surprised by how bright my bedroom is. A glance out the window and believe it or not (I was stunned myself), all the clouds are gone.

Doug, when you decide to brighten someone's day, you really go all out. Thanks. Now I'm going to the beach.

Tad Ray Christiansen
11486 Victory Blvd.
N. Hollywood, CA 91606

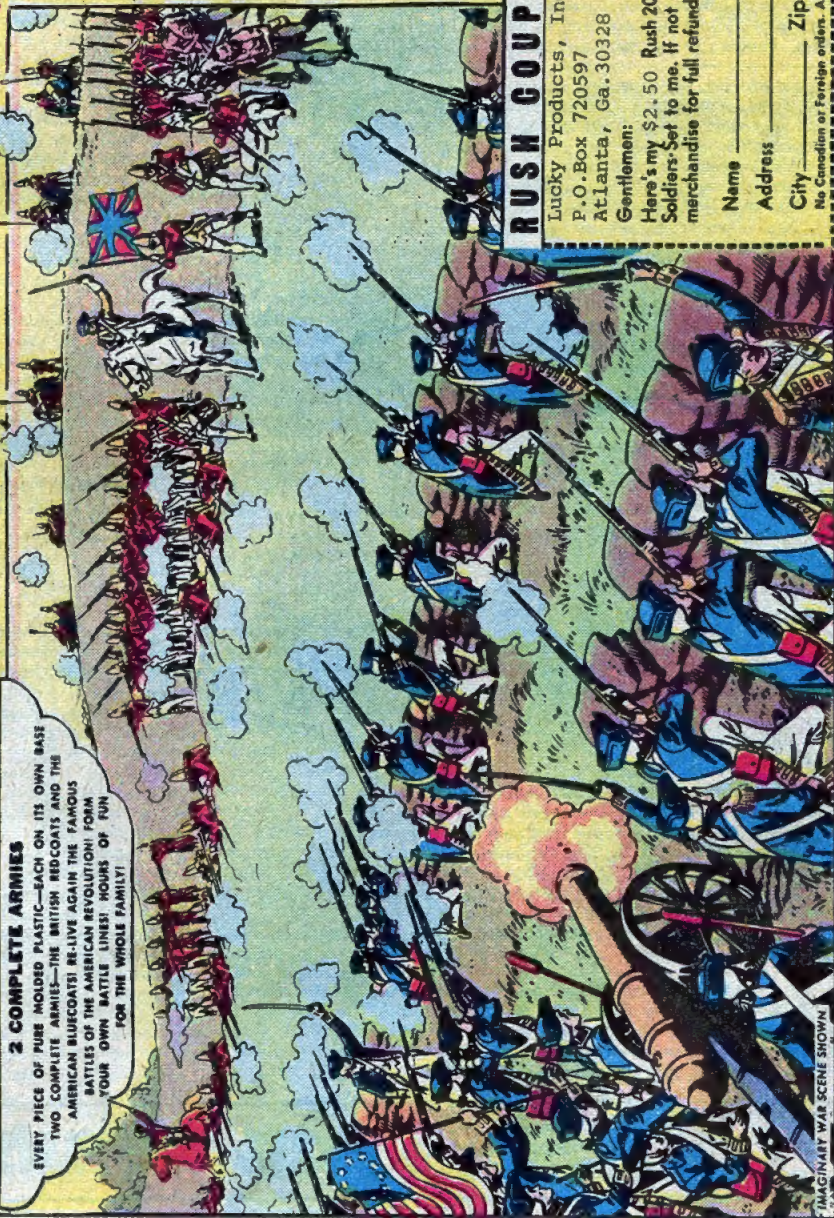
Good enough, Tad. Following the sun is fine, but remember what Jagger sings: "Make every song your favorite tune. . ." So don't let the rain wash you grey; flow with it right to the misty dawn. It only sets up a better green under a golden tomorrow. Until next time. . . be good.

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